

A QUALITY OF LIFE (QoL) IMPROVEMENT OF THE MINORITY CASTE PARTICIPANTS OF THE MICRO ENTERPRISES: AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE WEST BURDWAN, WEST BENGAL

MANIDIPA DASGUPTA¹ & SOURAV SARKAR²

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, University of Burdwan, West Bengal, India

²Research Assistant, Department of Commerce, University of Burdwan, West Bengal, India

ABSTRACT

The Micro Enterprises (MEs) are supposed to be the most vibrant enterprises in any developing country like India introducing appraising performance in production, employment generation and export promotion with a nominal level of input. Besides, they apply their effort to redress of the contemporaneous hazards of our nation like unemployment and resultantly poverty, social unrest etc. In this context, the poor in terms of wealth, literacy, skill etc. feel attracted to join there to improve their Quality of Life (QoL) in nutrition, health, education, wealth/standard of living and societal factors as MEs does not claim higher levels of capital, knowledge and skill to operate them. This progression would spread to the socially excluded deprived castes of our society (Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Communities) suffer due to lack of social respect and recognition and thus the respective community would choose MEs for their self-employment or employment generation.

Therefore, question may arise whether MEs could improve the QoL of the participants of the Minority section and if so what is the level of improvement of QoL and how far MEs could improve the QoL of the minority castes in different dimensions (Material Living Standard, Health, Education, Personal activities including work/Occupational etc.) after joining there.

Considering the fact, the present study aims at assessing the association between demographic characteristics like Gender, Religion and Marital Status of the surveyed sample individuals and the factors under the dimensions of QoL, comparing the level of improvement of QoL as per the perceptions of the individuals belonging to different caste categories and recommending some suggestions to the connected parties.

KEYWORDS: Micro Enterprises, Minority Caste & Quality of Life

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1. INTRODUCTION

The human development is accepted as the main way out of expansion of people's freedom to live long, healthy and creative lives with which they would be able to fulfil their goals equitably and sustainably¹. But in middle income countries like India, human deprivation in socio-economic phenomenal is ever found mainly due to discrepancies occurred for Minority Class difference as per caste, religion and gender. This would cause a genuine default in human civilization in which poverty, unemployment and social unrest would create crucial problems in

¹ <http://hdr.undp.org/>

sustainability of the social activities of the country². In this respect, the people of Minority caste have to face tremendous hardship in continuing their livelihood mainly due to their socio-economic backwardness in literacy, standard of living, child mortality etc.³ The backward caste community, therefore, can find their socio-economic recognition through participation in economic activity which can offer them improvement in their Quality of Life (QoL) with upliftment in socio-economic-cultural-political-psychological-familial dimensions. But their lack of proper education, skill and experience would make them again deprived from getting proper job opportunity in the formal sector. Therefore, beside agricultural activities, an alternative way out should be promoted which can easily be afforded and dealt with the level of economic strength and skill of the excluded section of the society.

In this very context, Micro Enterprises (MEs)⁴ [formerly known as Tiny Industries and renamed as per Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act, 2006] can firmly be regarded as the pathfinder with which the marginalized people in respect of economic status, educational level and also social status like caste, gender etc. can get opportunity to explore their economic actions and thus can build up upliftment in QoL of their own and their family members⁵. In this context, different social status of general populace in respect of their gender class (Male-Female), Caste (Reserved-Unreserved), Marital Status (Single-Married) etc. may enjoy the respective upgradation in different levels.

In this paper, therefore, an effort has been framed to address the question that how far MEs can improve QoL of their participants belonging to the Minority Class mainly as per caste and whether there is any association between the demographic dimensions of the participants and the factors of QoL where an in-depth investigation in West Burdwan⁶, West Bengal which has contained a significant number of Minority class in ownership in MEs⁷. Keeping in view the background, the remainder part of present study has been structured in 6 more sections. Section 2 deals with the review of the related literature, while section 3 discloses the research gap. The objectives of the present study here are exhibited in section 4. Section 5 represents the methodology followed in the present paper. Section 6 highlights on the results and discussions. Section 7 deals with the conclusion and recommendation.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The progressive attitude of the entrepreneur movement towards its participants could ensure the improvement of QoL of their participants (Morris, et al. 1995, as cited in Amato & Amato, 2002) where QoL could be termed as freedom in economic way outs, in movement and social upliftment (Sutton-Brown 2011). A multi-dimensional concept of QoL would consider all those factors influencing the state of our lives like person's physical health, psychological state, level of

² India would contain the largest populace under the international USD 1.90-a-day poverty line (World Bank, 2016) <https://www.businesstoday.in/current/economy-politics/india-has-highest-number-of-people-living-below-poverty-line-world-bank/story/238085.html>

³ As per All India Census Report, 2011, literacy rate of OBC – 47%, SC – 54.70%, ST -47.10%; Child Mortality of OBC – 76%, SC – 83% and ST -84.20%; Owned House SC-90.40%, ST – 90.70%; Sanitation facility of SC - 23.70% and ST 17.10%

⁴ As per MSMED Act, 2006; The Manufacturing Micro Enterprises should have investment in Plant and Machinery within ₹25 lakh, while Service Rendering Micro Enterprises should have investment in equipment within ₹10 lakh. In MSMEs, MEs were found as 94.94% and 99.83% of the registered and unregistered enterprises respectively (All India Fourth Census Report of MSMEs 2006-07). Micro Enterprises (MEs) created 6486203 employment generation, ₹304522.92 crore of production and ₹28469.21 crore of export promotion which were respectively 68.98%, 40.76% and 37.42% of that of MSMEs. MEs made ₹185509.64 Crore (39.36% of total MSMEs) input in production.

⁵ Number of Units owned by SC-116603, ST-43348 and OBC-587847 (All India Census Report, 2011)

⁶ According to West Bengal Human Development Report- 2014, Burdwan ranked 5th with 0.47 HDI.

⁷ As per All India Census Report, in West Bengal, MEs owned by SC was 4253, by ST was 381 and by OBC was 4291

independence, social relationships, personal beliefs and their relationship to the environment, adequacy in material circumstances and a sense of personal satisfaction with life (WHOQOL, 1995, as cited in Kumar, 2013).

In entrepreneurial movements towards uplifting participants socio-economic position, MEs would specially be mentioned for their easy approachability to all the levels of society specially marginalised poor as per caste, religion, gender etc. who could enjoy the inner transformation of their consciousness and thus could overcome external barriers to enjoy the flavour of improvement of their QoL in different dimensions like economic independence, ownership in assets, habit of savings, freedom from debt, additional employment, self-confidence, social cohesion, etc. (Sen & Batliwala, 2000, as cited in Janaki, 2014; Kabeer, 2001, as cited in Malhotra et al. 2002; Sharma & Varma, 2008; Siwal, 2009; Subramaniam, Tan, Maniam, & Ali, 2013; Chhipa, Sharma & Dubey, 2014; Yasmeen & Gangaiah, 2014; Jana 2015; Dasgupta 2018).

But, though entrepreneurial movements would ensure progress in participants, sometimes for inadequate financial assistance from banks/financial institutions, lack of management and accounting skills, increased competition, poor access to market information, power cut, primitive technology, lack of access to education, training, poor infrastructure, etc., the entrepreneurial progress would be hindered (Tambunam, 2008; Bekele & Worku, 2008; Okafor & Mordi, 2010; Parvin, Jinrong, & Rahaman, 2012; Niethammer, 2013; Kiraka et al. 2013; Vijayaragavan, 2014).

3. RESEARCH GAP

From the literature till reviewed it can be considered that a number of literature has been framed for QoL and its conceptual aspects. Negligible amount of work has been considered for detecting the contribution of MEs towards socio-economic development of their participants. But no literature till reviewed took its effort to focus on the linkage between MEs and their contributions towards improvement in QoL of their participants specially belonging to a Minority caste community vividly. Likewise, no intensive investigation through field study has been conducted to assess the QoL improvement of the participants of MEs. Therefore, to fill up the knowledge gap, the study takes its effort to estimate an overall QoL improvement of the participants of MEs belonging to Minority Caste considering an in-depth intensive investigation through primary survey.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study takes its objectives as to

- Identify the factors of QoL being improved in different dimensions,
- Assess the association between demographic characteristics/dimensions like Gender, Religion and Marital Status of the surveyed sample individuals and the factors under the dimensions of QoL (Material Living Standard, Health, Education, Personal activities including work/Occupational etc.) and evaluate the strength of association.
- Compare the level of improvement of QoL as per the perceptions of the individuals belonging to different caste categories – reserved and unreserved and between different groups of demographic dimensions like Male-Female under ‘Gender’ etc. under these caste categories.
- Recommend some suggestions for further improvement in QoL of the participants of MEs.

5. METHODOLOGY OF THE PRESENT PAPER

5.1 Type of Study

The present study is predominantly an exploratory one with an intensive investigation and careful analysis.

5.2 Population, Sample and Sampling

Among 253 individual participants of 90 MEs enlisted in District Industries Centre (DIC), West Burdwan in last three years⁸ (2014-2015 – 2016-2017), 167 participants (66 per cent) have been selected from 52 total sample units through simple random sampling method.

5.3 Method of Data Collection

Besides secondary sources (Reports, Articles, Books, News Paper Report etc.), The present study collected its data through a primary survey (November, 2017 – February, 2018) where two blocks in West Burdwan–Faridpur Durgapore and Kaksha, have been selected purposively.

5.4 Tools of Data Collection

Data have been collected through interview and questionnaire. In this context, the factors of QoL being improved have been detected through the related literature and then pilot survey (October, 2017) made on 40 units (23.95 percent of 167 units). In the questionnaire, a 5 point rating scale (1= Not at all Improved, 2 = Little bit Improved, 3 = Moderately Improved, 4 = Improved and 5 = Extremely Improved) has been used to detect the degree of improvement of QoL of the responding concerned individuals after getting entered into MEs. Now, the responses of the sample individuals on the 5 point rating scale have been summarised into three **categories like (i) Not Improved At All** [1 (Not at all)], **(ii) Not Fully Improved** [2 (Little bit) and 3 (Moderately)] and **(iii) Fully Improved** [4 (Highly) and 5 (Extremely)]. Therefore, to continue the study intensively with QoL, further testing has been conducted with only **two categories, Not Fully Improved and Fully Improved**. In this context, **Not Improved At All** for not considering any degree of improvement of QoL of the respondents as made by MEs, would not be accepted.

5.5 Statistical Tools

- Testing of the association between demographic characteristics of respondents and factors of QoL being improved: To measure the association between the demographic characteristics of the respondents and different factors under the dimensions of QoL of the individual participant, the nonparametric *Pearson Chi-square test statistic* has been used.
- Testing of the Strength of Association between the demographic characteristics of respondents and factors of QoL being improved: After considering the association test with Pearson Chi-Square Test statistic, an attempt has been taken to measure the **strength of the association**, if there be any, with *Cramer's V* (ϕ_c). The formula of the test statistic is:

⁸Based on the availability of the registered list of MEs in DIC, West Burdwan and keeping in mind the time and resource constraints, the population size of the present study has been taken.

$$V = \sqrt{\frac{\varphi^2}{\min(k-1, r-1)}} = \sqrt{\frac{\chi^2/n}{\min(k-1, r-1)}}$$

$$\sqrt{\frac{\varphi^2}{\min(k-1)(r-1)}} = \sqrt{\frac{\chi^2/n}{\min(k-1)(r-1)}}$$

Here, φ^2 is the phi coefficient, χ^2 is derived from Pearson's chi-square test, n is the grand total of observations, k being the number of columns and r being the number of rows. Degrees of Freedom (df) would be $\min(r-1, c-1)$. The p -value for the significance of V is the same one that is calculated using the Pearson's chi-squared test.

5.6 Dimensions of the Inferential Study

The study has segregated the sample respondents into two Groups as per the caste category – **Group A – Reserved (SC, ST and OBC), Group B – Unreserved (General)**. In this regard, three dimensions under the demographic characteristics of the respondents like **Gender, Religion and Marital Status**⁹ have been structured. Under each of the dimensions, two groups have been framed like Gender - Male (1) and Female (2); in Religion - Hindu (1) and Islam (2) and under Marital Status – Single (1) and Married (2). In this context, the different factors of QoL have been considered under 12 areas like (i) Material Standard of Living; (ii) Health; (iii) Education and Intelligence, (iv) Emotional; (v) Psychological; (vi) Personal activities including work/Occupational; (vii) Political voice and governance; (viii) Social connections and relationships; (ix) Environment (Internal and External); (x) Physical/ Personal insecurity; (xi) Economic insecurity and (xii) Spirituality wherein under different sub-factors would be taken into account. Figure – 1 discloses the dimensions of QoL, while Figure – 2 discloses the dimensions used for framing out the hypotheses.

⁹For other demographic characteristics like Age and Caste, the respondents have not shown any variation so that at least two groups can be framed. So, the study has limited its scope of demographic characteristics to these three demographic characteristics like Gender, Religion and Marital Status.

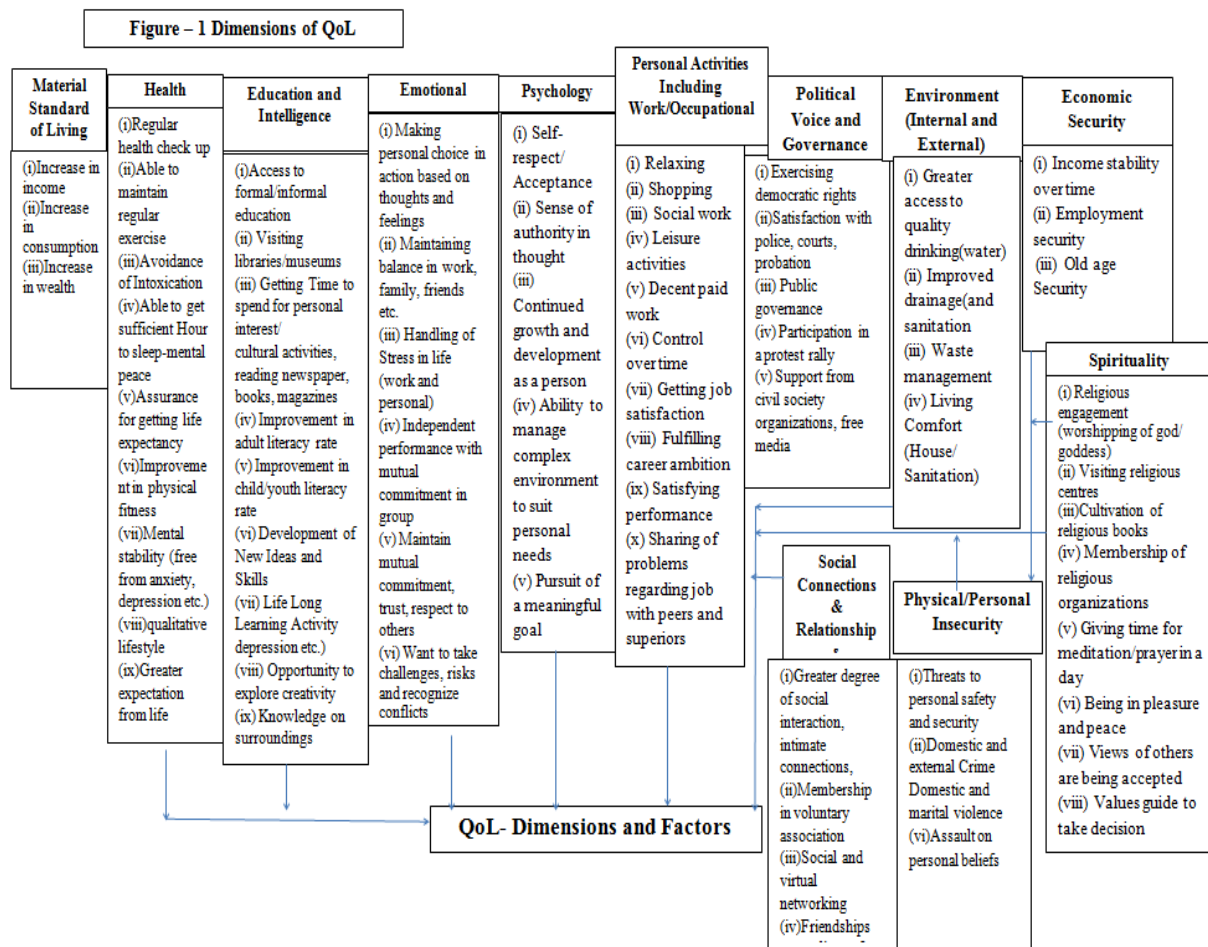


Figure 1: Dimensions of QoL

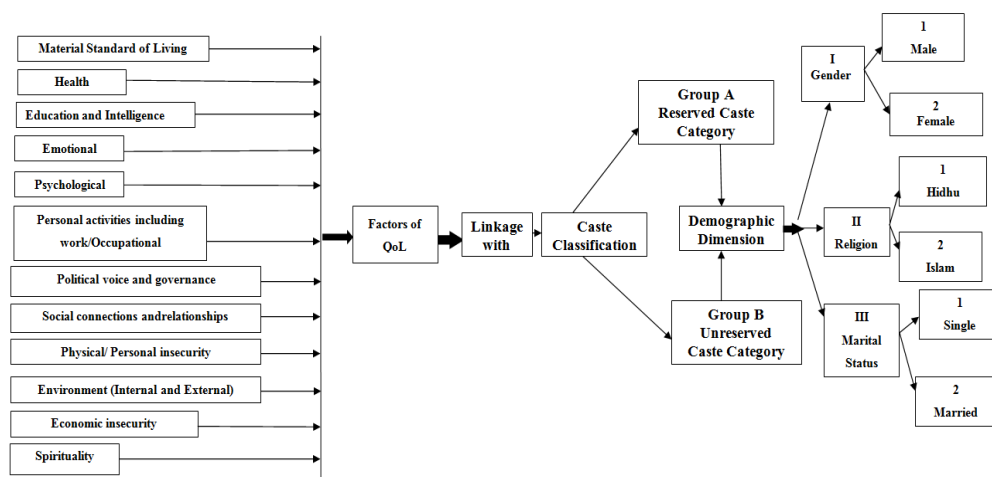


Figure 2: Dimensions of the Inferential Study

The following hypotheses are used in the present study.

H₀₁: There is no significant association between the ‘Gender’ of the respondents attached with the surveyed sample MEs and their response patterns on the improvement in QoL in different dimensions and factors under these.

H₀₂: There is no significant association between the ‘Religion’ of the respondents attached with the surveyed sample MEs and their response patterns on the improvement in QoL in different dimensions and factors under these.

H₀₃: There is no significant association between the ‘Marital Status’ of the respondents attached with the surveyed sample MEs and their response patterns on the improvement in QoL in different dimensions and factors under these.

5.8 Variables

The variables of the present study have been selected on the basis of the response patters of the individual respondent in the fully improved category. In this context, if a majority of the individuals i.e. more than 51 per cent of the respondents responded in fully improved category for any factor, that would be considered as improved only as per the perception of the individual participant after being involved in the MEs.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

6.1 Profile of the Surveyed Sample Respondents

Out of the surveyed sample respondents, unreserved caste category (Group – B) has contained more individuals (93 or 55.69 per cent) than the individuals under reserved caste category (SC/ST/OBC) (Group – A) (74 or 44.31 per cent). Out of the reserved caste category, 47.30 per cent (35 individuals) and 52.70 per cent (39 individuals) were male and female respectively, while the same in the unreserved caste category was 72.04 per cent (67 individuals) and 27.96 per cent (26 individuals). Likewise, for religion, 37.84 per cent (28 individuals) and 62.16 per cent (46 individuals) in the reserve caste category were detected as Hindu and Islam respectively, while the same for unreserved category were 78.49 per cent (73 individuals) and 21.50 per cent (20 individuals). Under caste-related demographic factor, 35.14 per cent (26 individuals) and 64.86 per cent (48 individuals) were under the reserve caste category, while in unreserved caste category they were detected as 35.48 per cent (33 individuals) and 64.52 per cent (60 individuals). Table –1 reflects the demographic status of the respondents as evident from primary survey. Table – 1 reflects the detail of the profile of the surveyed sample units.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Sample Surveyed Respondents

Demographic Characteristics		Caste Categories		Total
		Reserved (%)*	Unreserved (%)*	
Sex	1=Male	3(47.30%)	67(72.04%)	102
	2=Female	39 (52.70%)	26(27.96%)	65
Religion	1=Hindu	28 (37.84%)	73(78.49%)	101
	2=Islam	46 (62.16%)	20 (21.50%)	66
Marital Status	1=Single	26 (35.14%)	33(35.48%)	59
	2=Married	48 (64.86%)	60 (64.52%)	108
Total		74 (44.31%)	93 (55.69%)	167 (100%)

Source: Primary Survey (November, 2017 – February, 2018)

* - Percentage is calculated as per caste category-wise total number of individuals

6.2 QoL and its Linkage with the Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents.

6.2.1 Improved Dimensions and Factors Under QoL

As per the response patterns of the surveyed sample individuals collected from field survey (November, 2017 – February, 2018), **10 dimensions except** Material Standard of Living and Physical/ Personal Insecurity have been detected as important¹⁰ like **‘Health’**[Able to get Sufficient Hour to Sleep, Avoidance of Intoxication¹, Assurance for getting life expectancy, Improvement in physical fitness and Greater expectation from life], **‘Education and Intelligence’** [Development of New Ideas and Skills, Life Long Learning Activity, Opportunity to explore creativity and Knowledge on surroundings], **‘Emotional’**[Making personal choice in action based on thoughts and feelings and Maintaining balance in work, family, friends etc.], **‘Psychological’** [Ability to Manage Complex, Self-Respect/Acceptance, Sense of authority in, Making Qualities for Others], **‘Personal activities including work/occupational’**[Control over time, Fulfilling Career Ambition, Satisfying Performance and Sharing of Problems], **‘Political Voice and Governance’**[Exercising democratic rights], **‘Social Connections and Relationships’**[Social and Virtual Networking and Freedom across lines of race], **‘Environment (Internal and External)’**, [Improved drainage and sanitation, Waste Management and Living Comfort], **‘Economic security’**[Income Volatility over time, Employment Security and Old Age security], **‘Spirituality’**[Values guide to take decision].

Therefore, out of the dimensions of QoL and their factors being improved as per the perception of the individuals, **Income Volatility over time** under **‘Economic Security’** has been considered as the most significant factor as per the response pattern of the target group in the fully improved category (65.27 per cent) as followed by the factors like Exercising democratic rights (Political Voice and Governance), Control over time (Personal activities including work/occupational) etc.

6.2.2 Association between QoL and Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

6.2.2.1 Demographic Characteristics – Gender

The demographic characteristic of the surveyed sample respondents like **‘Gender’** has been detected as significantly associated with the six dimensions of QoL

- Health
- Education and Intelligence
- Emotional
- Personal activities including work/Occupational
- Environment (Internal and External) and
- Economic insecurity (Table-2).

¹⁰ Percentage of Responses of the surveyed sample individuals was calculated as per the data collected from Primary Survey (November, 2017 – February, 2018).

Table 2: QoL Factors Improved and Associated with Gender (H₀₁: Chi-Square Test Results)

QOL Factors	Degree of Responses (%) *		Demography – Sex (1: Male, 2: Female)	Group – A Reserved (SC, ST, OBC) (%)**		Group – A Unreserved (General) (%)		Chi- Square	d.f.	Cramer's V	P Value
	Not Fully	Fully		Not Fully	Fully	Not Fully	Fully				
Health											
Avoidance of Intoxication	47.80	52.20	1	36.36	63.64	40.63	59.37	7.414	1	0.216	0.006
			2	47.37	52.63	83.33	16.67				
Able to get sufficient Hour to sleep	37.72	62.28	1	31.43	68.57	25.37	74.63	11.773	1	0.266	0.001
			2	35.90	64.10	80.77	19.23				
Improvement in physical fitness	48.50	51.50	1	40.00	60.00	44.78	55.22	3.021	1	0.134	0.082
			2	48.72	51.28	69.23	30.77				
Greater expectation from life	47.90	52.10	1	40.00	60.00	37.31	62.69	9.817	1	0.242	0.002
			2	46.15	53.85	88.46	11.54				
Education and Intelligence											
Development of New Ideas and Skills	48.47	51.53	1	40.00	60.00	41.54	58.46	5.775	1	0.188	0.016
			2	47.37	52.63	80.00	20.00				
Life Long Learning Activity	46.11	53.89	1	42.86	57.14	35.82	64.18	6.536	1	0.198	0.011
			2	46.15	53.85	76.92	23.08				
Opportunity to explore creativity	47.31	52.69	1	34.29	65.71	46.27	53.73	2.787	1	0.129	0.095
			2	35.90	64.10	84.62	15.38				
Knowledge on surroundings	47.90	52.10	1	34.29	65.71	40.30	59.70	9.817	1	0.242	0.002
			2	53.85	46.15	76.92	23.08				
Emotional											
Making personal choice in action based on thoughts	43.11	56.89	1	37.14	62.86	31.34	68.66	10.221	1	0.247	0.001
			2	46.15	53.85	76.92	23.08				
Maintaining balance in work, family, etc.	48.50	51.50	1	34.29	65.71	46.27	53.73	4.225	1	0.159	0.040
			2	48.72	51.28	73.08	26.92				
Personal activities Including Work/Occupational											
Fulfilling career ambition	44.85	55.15	1	26.47	73.53	44.78	55.22	4.092	1	0.157	0.043
			2	60.53	39.47	46.15	53.85				
Environment (Internal and External)											
Improved drainage and sanitation	40.61	59.39	1	37.14	62.86	31.82	68.18	5.204	1	0.178	0.023
			2	42.11	57.89	65.38	34.62				
Living Comfort	48.50	51.50	1	37.14	62.86	44.78	55.22	4.225	1	0.159	0.040
			2	53.85	46.15	65.38	34.62				
Economic Insecurity											
Employment Security	47.24	52.76	1	41.18	58.82	40.63	59.38	4.068	1	0.158	0.044
			2	46.15	53.85	73.08	26.92				
Old age Security	48.75	51.25	1	40.00	60.00	40.98	59.02	6.341	1	0.199	0.012
			2	44.74	55.26	84.62	15.38				

Source: Primary Survey (November, 2017 – February, 2018)

Note: *= % is calculated on the basis of the total of Fully and Not Fully improved categories after eliminating Not Improved. At All, **= % is calculated in respect of each group for each category

6.2.2.1.1 Health

In **Health** related dimension, Avoidance of Intoxication ($\chi^2 = 7.414$, $df=1$, $P=0.006 < 0.01$), Able to get sufficient hour to sleep ($\chi^2 = 11.773$, $df=1$; $P=0.001 < 0.01$), Improvement in physical fitness ($\chi^2 = 3.021$, $df=1$, $P=0.082 < 0.1$), Greater expectation from life ($\chi^2 = 9.817$, $df=1$, $P=.002 < 0.01$) have been detected as significantly associated with 'Gender' of the concerned target sample, classified into two caste categories – Reserved and Unreserved. The male members of the unreserved caste category have been found to respond maximum¹¹ in favour of the factors 'Able to get sufficient hours to sleep' and 'Greater Expectation from life' in improving their Health-related QoL after getting entered into MEs. On the contrary, the male members of reserved caste category have made their responses maximum in favour of other factors, Avoidance of Intoxication, Improvement in Physical fitness. In all these factors, the female members of the unreserved caste category have responded at the least amongst all other groups.

6.2.2.1.2 Education and Intelligence

In **Education and Intelligence** related dimension, Development of New Ideas and Skill ($\chi^2 = 5.775$, $df=1$; $P=0.016 < 0.05$), Life Long Learning Activity ($\chi^2 = 6.536$, $df=1$; $P=0.011 < 0.05$), Opportunity to explore creativity ($\chi^2 =$

¹¹The response of individual means the percentage found in the 'Fully Improved' Rank category.

2.787, $df=1$, $P=0.095<0.1$), Knowledge on Surroundings ($\chi^2 = 9.817$, $df=1$, $P=0.002<0.01$) have been detected as significantly associated with Gender of the concerned target sample, classified into two caste categories – Reserved and Unreserved. With exception of ‘Life Long Learning Activity’ where the male members of the unreserved caste category have responded maximum in favour of the factor in improving Education and Intelligence-related QoL, in other factors like ‘Development of New Ideas and Skill’, ‘Opportunity to explore creativity’ and ‘Knowledge on Surroundings’, the male members of reserved caste category have been found to respond maximum in favour of the factor. The female members of unreserved caste categories, in this respect, have responded at the least amongst all other groups.

6.2.2.1.3 Emotional

In **Emotional** related QoL, Making Personal Choice ($\chi^2 = 10.221$, $df=1$, $P=.001<0.05$) and Maintaining balance in work ($\chi^2 = 4.225$, $df=1$, $P=.040<0.05$) have been detected as significantly associated with Gender of the concerned target sample, classified into two caste categories – Reserved and Unreserved. The male members of the unreserved caste category have made their response in favour of making improvements in Emotional-related QoL through ‘Making personal choice’ maximum amongst all other groups in this respect, while in ‘Maintaining balance in work’, the male members of reserved caste category have responded maximum in favour of it in improving Emotional-related QoL. In this context, the female members of unreserved category have been found at the least as per their responses in favour of those factors – ‘Making a personal choice’ and ‘Maintaining balance in work’ in improving their Emotional-related QoL.

6.2.2.1.4 Personal Activities including Work/Occupation

Only one factor ‘Fulfilling career ambition’ ($\chi^2 = 4.092$, $df=1$, $P=0.043<0.05$) have been detected as significantly associated with Gender of the concerned target sample, classified into two caste categories – Reserved and Unreserved. In this factor, the male members of reserved caste category while mentioning the maximum response in fully improved category i.e. in favour of Personal Activities including work/occupation-related QoL as improved through ‘Fulfilling career ambition’ after getting entered in MEs, the counter parts i.e. female members of reserved category have been found to reflect the least percentage in the respective rank category.

6.2.2.1.5 Environmental (Internal and External)

In Environmental-related QoL, ‘Improved drainage and sanitation’ ($\chi^2 = 5.204$, $df=1$, $P=0.023<0.05$) and ‘Living Comfort’ ($\chi^2 = 4.225$, $df=1$, $P=0.040<0.05$) have been detected as significantly associated with Gender of the concerned target sample, classified into two caste categories – Reserved and Unreserved. In the first factor under Environment-related QoL i.e. ‘Improved drainage and sanitation’, the male members of the unreserved caste category have made their response in favour of making an improvement in QoL maximum amongst all other groups in this respect, while in ‘Living comfort’, the male members of reserved caste category responded maximum in favour of it. The female members of the unreserved caste category have responded least in favour of the improvement of Environment-related QoL after getting entered into MEs.

6.2.2.1.6 Economic Security

In the dimension of Economic Security-related QoL, Employment Security ($\chi^2 = 4.068$, $df=1$, $P=0.044<0.05$) and Old Age security ($\chi^2 = 6.341$, $df=1$, $P=0.012<0.05$) have been detected as significantly associated with Gender of the concerned target sample, classified into two caste categories – Reserved and Unreserved. In Employment Security, the female members of the unreserved category have been detected to respond in favour of improving in Economic Security-

related QoL after getting entered into MEs through ‘Employment Security’ and also through ‘Old-age Security’ maximum amongst the other groups, while the male members of the unreserved category have responded least for both of the factors under Employment Security.

6.2.2.2 Demographic Characteristics – Religion

The demographic characteristic of the surveyed sample respondents like ‘**Religion**’ has been detected as significantly associated with four dimensions of QoL

- Education and Intelligence
- Psychology
- Personal Activities including work/Occupational and
- Social connections and relations (Table 3).

Table 3: QoL Factors Improved and Associated with Religion (H₀₂: Chi-Square Test Results)

QOL Factors	Degree of Responses (%) [*]		Demography Religion (1 = Hindu, 2 = Islam.)	Group – A Reserved (SC, ST, OBC) (%) ^{**}		Group – B Unreserved (General) (%) ^{**}		Chi-Square	d.f.	Cramer's V	P Value
	Not Fully	Fully		Not Fully	Fully	Not Fully	Fully				
Education and Intelligence											
Opportunity to explore creativity	47.31	52.69	1	46.43	53.57	56.16	43.84	3.890	1	0.153	0.049
			2	28.26	71.74	60.00	40.00				
Psychological											
Making qualities for others	47.88	52.12	1	53.57	46.43	56.34	43.66	5.845	1	0.188	0.016
			2	32.61	67.39	45.00	55.00				
Personal Activities Including Work/Occupational											
Social work	49.07	50.93	1	50.00	50.00	45.71	54.29	3.141	1	0.137	0.076
			2	61.36	38.64	31.58	68.42				
Social Connections and Relationships											
Friendships across lines of race	47.31	52.69	1	32.14	67.86	60.27	39.73	2.740	1	0.128	0.098
			2	30.43	69.57	60.00	40.00				

Source: Primary Survey (November, 2017 – February, 2018).

Note: *= % is calculated on the basis of the total of Fully and Not Fully Improved categories after eliminating Not Improved At All, **= % is calculated in respect of each group for each category

6.2.2.2.1 Education and Intelligence

Under the Education and Intelligence–related QoL, only one factor, ‘Opportunity to explore creativity’ ($\chi^2 = 3.890$, $df=1$, $P=0.049<0.05$) has been detected as significantly associated with Religion of the concerned target sample, classified into two caste categories– Reserved and Unreserved. In this context, the Islam members of reserved category have responded in favour of ‘Opportunity to explore creativity’ maximum amongst the other groups of individual, while the same religion community in unreserved caste category have responded the least in this regard.

6.2.2.2.2 Psychology

In Psychology – related QoL, only one factor, ‘Making Qualities for others’ ($\chi^2 = 5.854$, $df=1$, $P=0.016<0.05$) has been detected as significantly associated with Religion of the concerned target sample classified into two caste categories – Reserved and Unreserved. In this context, the Islam members of reserved category have responded in favour of ‘Making Qualities for others’ maximum amongst the other groups of individual, while Hindu community in unreserved caste category has responded the least in this regard.

6.2.2.2.3 Personal Activities Including Work/Occupational

Under the Personal Activities including work/Occupational – related QoL, only ‘Social Work’ ($\chi^2 = 3.141$, $df=1$, $P=0.076<0.1$) has been detected as significantly associated with Religion of the concerned target sample, classified into two caste categories – Reserved and Unreserved. In this context, the Islam members of the unreserved category have responded ‘Social Work’ maximum amongst the other group of individual, while the same religious community in the reserved caste category has responded the least in this regard.

6.2.2.2.4 Social Connections and Relations

In Social connections and relations-related QoL, only ‘Friendships across lines of race’ ($\chi^2 = 2.740$, $DF=1$, $P=0.098<0.1$) has been detected as significantly associated with the religion of the concerned target sample, classified into two caste categories – Reserved and Unreserved. In this context, the Islam members of reserved category have responded in favour of ‘Friendships across lines of race’ maximum amongst the other groups of individual, while the Hindu community in the unreserved caste category has responded the least.

6.2.2.3 Demographic Characteristics – Marital Status

The demographic characteristic of the surveyed sample respondents like ‘**Marital Status**’ has been detected as significantly associated with five dimensions of QoL

- Education and Intelligence
- Emotional
- Social connections and relations
- Environment (Internal and External) and
- Spirituality (Table – 4).

Table 4: QoL Factors Improved and Associated with Marital Status (H_{03} : Chi-Square Test Results)

QOL Factors	Degree of Responses (%)*		Demography – Marital Status (1 = Single, 2 = Married)	Group – A Reserved (SC, ST, OBC) (%)**		Group – B Unreserved (General) (%)**		Chi-Square	d.f	Cramer's Value	P Value
	Not Fully	Fully		Not Fully	Fully	Not Fully	Fully				
Education and Intelligence-											
Knowledge on surroundings	47.90	52.10	1	38.46	61.54	39.39	60.61	2.909	1	0.132	0.088
			2	47.92	52.08	56.67	43.33				
Emotional											
Making personal choice	43.11	56.89	1	34.62	65.38	30.30	69.70	4.428	1	0.163	0.035
			2	45.83	54.17	51.67	48.33				
Maintaining balance in work,	48.50	51.50	1	26.92	73.08	48.48	51.52	3.310	1	0.141	0.069
			2	50.00	50.00	56.67	43.33				
Social Connections and Relationships											
Friendships across lines of race	47.31	52.69	1	50.00	50.00	63.64	36.36	3.899	1	0.153	0.048
			2	20.83	79.17	58.33	41.67				
Environment (Internal and External)											
Improved drainage and sanitation	40.61	59.39	1	53.85	46.15	45.45	54.55	2.781	1	0.130	0.095
			2	31.91	68.09	38.98	61.02				
Spirituality											
Religious engagement	49.70	50.30	1	57.69	42.31	60.61	39.39	3.378	1	0.142	0.066
			2	37.50	62.50	50.00	50.00				

Source: Primary Survey (November, 2017 – February, 2018).

Note: *= % is calculated on the basis of the total of Fully and Not Fully Improved categories after eliminating Not Improved At All, **= % is calculated in respect of each group for each category

Under the Education and Intelligence – related QoL, only one factor, ‘Knowledge on surroundings’ ($\chi^2 = 2.909$, $df=1$, $P=0.088<0.1$) has been detected as significantly associated with Marital Status of the concerned target sample classified into two caste categories – Reserved and Unreserved. In this context, the single members of reserved category have responded in favour of ‘Knowledge on surroundings’ maximum amongst the other groups of individual, while the married members of unreserved caste category have responded the least.

6.2.2.3.2 Emotional

Under the dimension of Emotional-related QoL, ‘Making personal choice’ ($\chi^2 = 4.428$, $df=1$, $sig= 0.035$; $P<0.05$) and ‘Maintaining balance in work’ ($\chi^2 = 3.310$, $df=1$, $P=0.069<0.05$) have been detected as significantly associated with Marital Status of the concerned target sample classified into two caste categories – Reserved and Unreserved. In ‘Making personal choice’, the single members of the unreserved category have been detected to respond in favour of ‘Making personal choice’, while the married members of unreserved caste category have responded the least. In ‘Maintaining balance in work’, the single members of the reserved caste category have been detected as highest respondents, while the married members of unreserved caste category have responded the least (43.33 per cent) in this regard.

6.2.2.3.3 Social Connections and Relations

Under the Social connections and relations– related QoL, only one factor, ‘Friendships across lines of race’ ($\chi^2 = 3.899$, $df=1$, $P=0.048<0.05$) has been detected as significantly associated with Marital Status of the concerned target sample classified into two caste categories – Reserved and Unreserved. In this context, the married members of reserved category have responded in favour of ‘Friendships across lines of race’ maximum amongst the other groups of individual, while the single members of the unreserved caste category have responded the least.

6.2.2.3.4 Environment (Internal and External)

Under the Environment (Internal and External) – related QoL, only one factor, ‘Improved drainage and sanitation’ ($\chi^2 = 2.781$, $df=1$, $P=0.095<0.1$) has been detected as significantly associated with Marital Status of the concerned target sample classified into two caste categories – Reserved and Unreserved. In this context, the married members of reserved category have responded in favour of improvement in Environment (Internal and External)-related QoL after getting entered into MEs through the factor ‘Improved drainage and sanitation’ maximum amongst the other groups of individual, while the single members of the same caste category have responded the least (46.15 per cent).

6.2.2.3.5 Spirituality

In Spirituality– related QoL, only one factor, ‘Religious engagement’ ($\chi^2 = 3.378$, $df=1$, $P=0.066<0.1$) has been detected as significantly associated with Marital Status of the concerned target sample classified into two caste categories – Reserved and Unreserved. In this context, the married members of reserved caste category have responded in favour of ‘Religious engagement’ maximum amongst the other groups of individual, while the single members of the unreserved caste category have responded the least.

6.3 Strength of Association Between Demographic Dimensions and Factors of QoL Being Improved

The degrees of association in between the demographic characteristics like **Gender, Religion, Marital Status** and the respective **dimensions and the factors of QoL** were detected as between small to medium range as per the result of Cramer's V^{12} .

Table 2 - 4 reflect the results of Cramer's V .

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The economic involvement of the Minority Caste (SC, ST and OBC) in MEs, has offered them socio-familial recognition and thus made them mentally and physically fit which motivated them to lead healthy peaceful lives without any harmful intoxication etc. MEs, moreover, accepted the unskilled/semi-skilled personnel under their purview and offered them scopes to develop their skills, creativity to operate. Additionally, MEs could also spread their assistance to the weaker sections of society belonging to the Minority Caste Category as per Marital Status (Single), Religion (Islam) etc. This would assist them to enhance educational strength; professionalism in choosing a standard job; social recognition, smooth peer-relationship and also better familial living standard. But in this context, the female members of the reserved caste category could not be found to enjoy their QoL improvement in different factors after getting entered into MEs as like as their male counterparts. Moreover, in some issues under the Health-related QoL, Education and Intelligence-related QoL, Emotional, Environmental-related QoL and most importantly in Economic Security related QoL, the Minorities would not be found to respond more significantly than the unreserved caste category. The same thing has been echoed in 'Single' marital status where they have not been found to respond in the matter of improvement in QoL in relation to Social connection and relationships, Environmental (Internal and External) and Spiritual.

Therefore, effort should be made to recognise the requirements of the 'Female' members and of the 'Single' members of the marital status, which would be related mainly with skill development to choose job, environmental protection mainly in operation, job-security, familial protection through take-care of the children of married women employees at the workshop etc. MEs thus maintained their responsibility in shaping improvement of the reserved caste category as per the different factors under QoL but their effort would be completed if they could improve the QoL of their 'Female' and 'Single' members fully.

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¹²Degree of association as per Cramer's V at df 1 = 0.1 Small; 0.3 = Medium, 0.5 = Large.

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